

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 6, 2006

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 27, 2006

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 1806**

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**Introduced by Senator Figueroa**  
*(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Levine)*

February 24, 2006

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An act to add Section 597.7 to the Penal Code, and to amend Section 23117 of the Vehicle Code, relating to animals.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1806, as amended, Figueroa. Animals: abuse.

Existing law provides that any person who subjects any animal to needless suffering, or inflicts unnecessary cruelty upon an animal, or in any manner abuses any animal or fails to provide an animal with proper food, drink, or shelter or protection from the weather is guilty of a crime punishable by a fine not exceeding \$20,000, imprisonment in a county jail, imprisonment in the state prison, or both fine and imprisonment.

This bill would state findings and declarations regarding the consequences of leaving companion animals unattended inside closed vehicles in the heat. This bill would provide that leaving or confining an animal in any unattended motor vehicle under conditions that endanger the health or well-being of an animal due to heat, cold, lack of adequate ventilation, or lack of food or water, or other circumstances that could reasonably be expected to cause suffering, disability, or death to the animal, ~~or if the temperature outside the vehicle is 85 degrees Fahrenheit or higher~~ is a crime punishable by a fine, imprisonment in a county jail, or both fine and imprisonment, as

specified. Because this bill would create a new crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Existing law provides that no person driving a motor vehicle shall transport any animal in the back of the vehicle in a space that is intended for any load on the vehicle on a highway, except as specified.

This bill would expand these provisions to any driver regardless of whether he or she is traveling on a highway. Because a violation of these provisions is an infraction, this bill would expand the definition of a crime and therefore impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 597.7 is added to the Penal Code, to  
2 read:

3 597.7. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
4 following:

5 (1) Leaving companion animals unattended inside closed  
6 vehicles in the heat, even for short periods of time, has caused  
7 severe injury and death to animals.

8 (2) Moderately warm temperatures outside can quickly lead to  
9 deadly temperatures inside a closed car, for example, within one  
10 hour an outside temperature of 72 degrees Fahrenheit can cause  
11 unhealthful conditions inside a vehicle that can adversely affect  
12 the health, safety, or well-being of an animal.

13 (3) With the vehicle windows left slightly open, an outside  
14 temperature of 85 degrees can cause a temperature of 102  
15 degrees inside a vehicle within 10 minutes, and 120 degrees  
16 within half of an hour. A healthy dog, whose normal body  
17 temperature ranges from 101 to 102.5 degrees, can withstand a  
18 body temperature of 107 to 108 for only a short time before  
19 suffering brain damage or death.

1 (4) Numerous organizations and individuals have worked to  
2 educate pet owners of the dangers of leaving animals unattended  
3 in vehicles in the heat, however, it is well established that  
4 educational approaches by themselves do not improve safety  
5 behavior. To be effective, educational approaches must be  
6 integrated with enforcement activities.

7 (5) It is, therefore, the intent of the Legislature to improve  
8 animal health and safety by both encouraging continued public  
9 education as well as discouraging this activity by imposing a  
10 penalty upon persons who leave or confine an animal in an  
11 unattended motor vehicle.

12 (b) No person shall leave or confine an animal in any  
13 unattended motor vehicle under conditions that endanger the  
14 health or well-being of an animal due to heat, cold, lack of  
15 adequate ventilation, or lack of food or water, or other  
16 circumstances that could reasonably be expected to cause  
17 suffering, disability, or death to the animal.

18 (c) Unless the animal suffers great bodily injury, a first  
19 conviction for violation of this section is punishable by a fine not  
20 exceeding two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) per animal. If the  
21 animal suffers great bodily injury, a violation of this section is  
22 punishable by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars  
23 (\$1,000), imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six  
24 months, or by both a fine and imprisonment. Any subsequent  
25 violation of this section, regardless of injury to the animal, is also  
26 punishable by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars  
27 (\$1,000), imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six  
28 months, or by both a fine and imprisonment.

29 (d) (1) Nothing in this section shall prevent a peace officer,  
30 *humane officer*, or an animal control officer from removing an  
31 animal from a motor vehicle if the animal's safety appears to be  
32 in immediate danger from heat, cold, lack of adequate  
33 ventilation, lack of food or water, or other circumstances that  
34 could reasonably be expected to cause suffering, disability, or  
35 death to the animal.

36 (2) A peace officer, *humane officer*, or animal control officer  
37 who removes an animal from a motor vehicle shall take it to an  
38 animal shelter or other place of safekeeping or, if the officer  
39 deems necessary, to a veterinary hospital for treatment.

(3) A peace officer or animal control officer is authorized to take all steps that are reasonably necessary for the removal of an animal from a motor vehicle, including, but not limited to, breaking into the motor vehicle.

(4) A peace officer, *humane officer*, or animal control officer who removes an animal from a motor vehicle shall, in a secure and conspicuous location on or within the motor vehicle, leave written notice bearing his or her name and office, and the address of the location where the animal can be claimed. The animal may be claimed by the owner only after payment of all charges that have accrued for the maintenance, care, medical treatment, or impoundment of the animal.

(5) No peace officer, *humane officer*, or animal control officer shall be held criminally or civilly liable for any action taken pursuant to this subdivision provided that he or she acted in good faith, on probable cause, and without malice.

(e) Nothing in this section shall preclude prosecution under both this section and Section 597 or any other provision of law, including city or county ordinances.

(f) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prohibit the transportation of horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, poultry or other agricultural animals in motor vehicles designed to transport such animals for agricultural purposes.

(g) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the fines collected for violations of this section shall be allocated as follows:

(1) Fifty percent shall be allocated to animal control to be used for costs associated with enforcement of this section.

(2) Fifty percent shall be allocated to the development of community education programs on the dangers associated with leaving animals unattended in motor vehicles.

SEC. 2 Section 23117 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

23117. (a) No person driving a motor vehicle shall ~~possess or~~ transport any animal in the back of the vehicle in a space intended for any load on the vehicle unless the space is enclosed or has side and tail racks to a height of at least 46 inches extending vertically from the floor, the vehicle has installed means of preventing the animal from being discharged, or the animal is cross tethered to the vehicle, or is protected by a

1 secured container or cage, in a manner which will prevent the  
2 animal from being thrown, falling, or jumping from the vehicle.

3 (b) This section does not apply to any of the following:

4 (1) The transportation of livestock.

5 (2) The transportation of a dog whose owner either owns or is  
6 employed by a ranching or farming operation who is traveling on  
7 a road in a rural area or who is traveling to and from a livestock  
8 auction.

9 (3) The transportation of a dog for purposes associated with  
10 ranching or farming.

11 SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to  
12 Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because  
13 the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school  
14 district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or  
15 infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the  
16 penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section  
17 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a  
18 crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the  
19 California Constitution.

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22 CORRECTIONS:

23 Text - Page 3.  
24